

MARGARET O'DONNELL.

MARCH 30, 1896.—Committed to the Committee of the Whole House and ordered to be printed.

Mr. THOMAS, from the Committee on Invalid Pensions, submitted the following

REPORT:

[To accompany H. R. 4823.]

The Committee on Invalid Pensions, to whom was referred the bill (H. R. 4823) for the relief of Margaret O'Donnell, respectfully report:

The claim of this woman under the act of August 5, 1892, was rejected in the Pension Bureau February 4, 1893, on the ground that there is no record of claimant's service as nurse during the period alleged, but from a certificate filed by her, it appears that she acted as a laundress. No title under said act.

The Secretary of the Interior, on appeal, decided that the action of the Pension Office in rejecting the claim on the ground stated was wrong, and he directed that the claim be reopened, and suggested a special examination for the purpose of ascertaining definitely by what authority claimant rendered the services as nurse, which are admitted by the Secretary to be *prima facie* shown to have been rendered, or that claimant be called upon to furnish additional evidence upon that branch of her case. The only point on which the Secretary seems to have any doubt is as to whether the services shown to have been rendered were rendered by proper authority. The evidence shows that her husband was a member of the Twenty-second Battery, New York Volunteer Light Artillery, and that she was with the battery from 1862 to 1865, acting a part of the time as laundress, and when any of the members of the battery were sick nursing them.

Twenty-five surviving members of the company join in a petition that she be pensioned, saying that she was constantly with them from 1862 to 1865, never absented herself one day from her post of duty, but was ever ready to give aid and comfort to the members of the company. That she is an invalid from rheumatism contracted in the service of her country.

The testimony of the members of the company shows that she did actually nurse them when sick, and that her services were greatly needed in view of the fact that there was no surgeon or assistant surgeon with them.

In view of these facts, the committee are willing to waive the technical requirement of the law, as to employment by authority recognized by the War Department, and they therefore recommend the passage of the bill.

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

On March 20, 1955, the following information was received from the State Department:

The information was received from the State Department on March 20, 1955, and is being furnished to you for your information.

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